

Vegan Powerhouse Pesto Pasta

Rating: ★★★★★

Makes: 8 Servings

“Noah’s younger brother has serious health issues and making food that everyone can eat can be challenging,” says Noah’s mom, Hilary. “This recipe is gluten-free and vegan, things that many people often think mean sacrificing favorite comfort foods or flavor. It took us a while to create a pesto recipe that was tasty, super healthy, and easy to make. We finally created one that is packed with just about everything a growing body needs. Noah likes this with Red, White, and Blue Salad—strawberries, peeled and diced apples, and Maine blueberries, served with a glass of soy milk.”

Ingredients

- 1 pound** quinoa pasta (we like macaroni)
- 2** ripe avocados (pitted and flesh scooped out)
- 1 cup** fresh baby spinach leaves
- 4 cups** fresh basil leaves (plus a few leaves reserved for garnish)
- 1/2 cup** walnuts
- 1 can** cannellini beans (drained and rinsed, 15-ounce)
- 2 tablespoons** freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 clove** garlic (minced)
- 1/8 teaspoon** freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup** olive oil
- 1 cup** grape tomatoes (cut in half)

Directions



Nutrition Information

Key Nutrients	Amount	% Daily Value*
Total Calories	431	
Total Fat	20 g	31%
Protein	8 g	
Carbohydrates	58 g	19%
Dietary Fiber	9 g	36%
Saturated Fat	2.5 g	13%
Sodium	83 mg	3%

MyPlate Food Groups

Vegetables	1 cup
Grains	1 1/2 ounces
Protein Foods	1/2 ounce

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and boil until al dente, about 10 minutes. Drain the pasta and return it to the pot.
2. While the pasta is boiling, combine the avocados and spinach in a food processor and pulse briefly (about 6 times). Add the basil, walnuts, 1/4 cup cannellini beans, lemon juice, garlic, and pepper and pulse about 6 more times. With the food processor on, gradually add the olive oil in a slow, steady stream.
3. Add 3/4 of the sauce to the cooked pasta, tossing gently to coat the noodles. Add the remaining sauce, as desired, and stir to coat the noodles evenly.
4. To serve, transfer the pasta to a big pasta bowl (family-style) and top with the remaining cannellini beans and grape tomatoes. Garnish with the reserved basil.

Notes

State: Maine

Child's Name: Noah Koch, 9

The Epicurious 2013 Healthy Lunchtime Challenge Cookbook